

II. Amendments to the Claims

This version and listing of the claims replaces all prior versions and listings of the claims.

1. (currently amended) A method of making an insulation product, comprising:
 - (a) forming an uncured or partially cured insulation web containing randomly oriented inorganic fibers and a heat curable binder agent;
 - (b) applying a nonwoven sheet to said web, said nonwoven sheet comprising randomly oriented glass fibers, wherein said nonwoven sheet is porous to water vapor and air evacuated when said insulation product is compressed; and
 - (c) heating said uncured or partially cured web and said nonwoven sheet together to cure said web to form a low density mat and to bond said nonwoven sheet to a first major surface of said low density mat with said heat curable binder agent.
2. (original) The method of claim 1 wherein said mat contains mineral fibers, rotary glass fibers, textile glass fibers, stonewool fibers, or a combination thereof.
3. (previously presented) The method of claim 1 further comprising, after step (c), applying a vapor retardant cellulosic or polymeric facing on a second major surface of said insulation mat.
4. (original) The method of claim 3 wherein said facing comprises kraft paper coated with bituminous material.
5. (canceled)
6. (original) The method of claim 1 wherein said forming step (a) comprises:

providing said randomly oriented inorganic fibers with a plurality of fiberizers;

treating said randomly oriented inorganic fibers with said heat curable binder agent; and

collecting said randomly oriented inorganic fibers treated with said heat curable binder agent on a forming belt,

said method being characterized by applying an increased amount of heat curable binder agent to said randomly oriented inorganic fibers disposed proximate to said first major surface.

7. (original) The method of claim 1 wherein said forming step (a) comprises:

providing said randomly oriented inorganic fibers with a plurality of fiberizers;

treating said randomly oriented inorganic fibers with said heat curable binder agent; and

collecting said randomly oriented inorganic fibers treated with said heat curable binder agent on a forming belt,

said method further comprising the step of applying a heat curable binder agent directly to said nonwoven sheet before or during step (b).

8. (original) The method of claim 1, wherein said low density mat has a density of less than about 2 pounds per cubic foot and a thickness of greater than about 2 inches.

9. (original) The method of claim 1, wherein said low density mat has a density of less than about 1.5 pounds per cubic foot and a thickness of greater than about 3.5 inches.

10. (previously presented) The method of claim 1, further comprising the step of affixing a nonwoven sheet comprising randomly oriented glass fibers to said web, whereby at least one of a second major surface and a side portion of said low density insulation mat is covered.

11. (currently amended) A method of making an insulation product, comprising:

(a) forming an uncured or partially cured insulation web containing randomly oriented glass fibers and a heat curable binder agent;

(b) applying a nonwoven sheet to said insulation web, said nonwoven sheet comprising randomly oriented fibers, wherein said nonwoven sheet is porous to water vapor and air evacuated when said insulation product is compressed; and

(c) heating said uncured or partially cured web and nonwoven sheet structure in a curing oven at a temperature between about 300-600°F to form a low density mat and to bond said nonwoven sheet to a first major surface of said low density mat with said heat curable binder agent,

wherein said randomly oriented fibers of said nonwoven sheet comprise fibers having a melting point above about said oven temperature.

12. (original) The method of claim 11 wherein said randomly oriented fibers of said nonwoven sheet comprise glass fibers.

13. (original) The method of claim 11 wherein said mat contains rotary glass fibers, textile glass fibers or a combination thereof.

14. (canceled)

15. (original) The method of claim 11 wherein said forming step (a) comprises:
providing said randomly oriented glass fibers with a plurality of fiberizers;
treating said randomly oriented glass fibers with said heat curable binder agent; and
collecting said randomly oriented glass fibers treated with said heat curable binder agent on a forming belt,

said method being characterized by applying an increased amount of heat curable binder agent to said randomly oriented glass fibers disposed proximate to said first major surface.

16. (original) The method of claim 11 wherein said forming step (a) comprises:

providing said randomly oriented glass fibers with a plurality of fiberizers;

treating said randomly oriented glass fibers with said heat curable binder agent; and

collecting said randomly oriented glass fibers treated with said heat curable binder agent on a forming belt,

said method further comprising the step of applying a heat curable binder agent directly to said nonwoven sheet before or during step (b).

17. (original) The method of claim 11, wherein said low density mat has a density of less than about 2 pounds per cubic foot and a thickness of greater than about 2 inches.

18. (previously presented) The method of claim 11, wherein said web is heated to a temperature between about 400-560°F for a period of at least 20 seconds.

19. (previously presented) The method of claim 11, wherein said web is heated to a temperature between about 450-525°F for a period of at least 20 seconds.

20. (previously presented) A method of making an insulation product, comprising:

(a) forming an uncured or partially cured insulation web containing randomly oriented glass fibers and a heat curable binder agent;

(b) applying a nonwoven sheet to said insulation web, said nonwoven sheet comprising first randomly oriented fibers and second randomly oriented fibers, said first randomly oriented fibers having a melting point above a temperature used in curing said insulation web and said second randomly oriented fibers having a melting point below said temperature used in curing said insulation web; and

(c) heating said uncured or partially cured insulation web and nonwoven sheet structure in a curing oven at a temperature above said melting point of said second fibers and below said melting point of said first fibers to form the insulation web into a low density mat and

to bond said nonwoven sheet to a first major surface of the low density mat at least in part by a melt bond between said second fibers and said randomly oriented glass fibers in said low density mat.

21. (original) The method of claim 20 wherein said first fibers comprise glass fibers.
22. (original) The method of claim 20 wherein said second fibers comprise polymeric fibers.
23. (original) The method of claim 20 wherein said nonwoven sheet comprises a laminate, said laminate comprising a first layer including said first randomly oriented fibers and a second layer including said second randomly oriented fibers.
24. (original) The method of claim 23 wherein said first fibers comprise glass fibers.
25. (original) The method of claim 24 wherein said second fibers comprise polymeric fibers.
26. (original) The method of claim 20 wherein said heating step (c) comprises melting at least some of said second fibers so as to melt bond said second fibers to said first major surface.
27. (original) The method of claim 20:

wherein said nonwoven sheet comprises a laminate, said laminate comprising a first layer including said first randomly oriented fibers and a second layer including said second randomly oriented fibers, and

wherein said heating step (c) comprises melting at least some of said second fibers so as to melt bond said second fibers to said first major surface and to said first layer.
28. (original) The method of claim 20, wherein said low density mat has a density of less than about 2 pounds per cubic foot and a thickness of greater than about 2 inches.

29. (previously presented) A method of making an insulation product, comprising:
- (a) forming an uncured or partially cured insulation web containing randomly oriented glass fibers and a heat curable binder agent;
 - (b) heating said uncured or partially cured insulation web in a curing oven to form a low density mat; and
 - (c) after step (b) and while said low density mat is at an elevated temperature from step (b), applying a nonwoven sheet to a first major surface, said nonwoven sheet comprising first randomly oriented fibers and second randomly oriented fibers, said first randomly oriented fibers having a melting point above said elevated temperature and said second randomly oriented fibers having a melting point below said elevated temperature,
- wherein said nonwoven sheet is bonded to said first major surface at least in part by a melt bond between said second fibers and said randomly oriented glass fibers in said low density mat.
30. (original) The method of claim 29 wherein said first fibers comprise glass fibers.
31. (original) The method of claim 30 wherein said second fibers comprise polymeric fibers.
32. (original) The method of claim 29 wherein said nonwoven sheet comprises a laminate, said laminate comprising a first layer including said first randomly oriented fibers and a second layer including said second randomly oriented fibers.
33. (original) The method of claim 32 wherein said first fibers comprise glass fibers.
34. (original) The method of claim 33 wherein said second fibers comprise polymeric fibers.

35. (original) The method of claim 29 wherein said heating step (c) comprises melting at least some of said second fibers so as to melt bond said second fibers to said first major surface.

36. (original) The method of claim 29:

wherein said nonwoven sheet comprises a laminate, said laminate comprising a first layer including said first randomly oriented fibers and a second layer including said second randomly oriented fibers, and

wherein said heating step (c) comprises melting at least some of said second fibers so as to melt bond said second fibers to said first major surface and to said first layer.

37. (original) The method of claim 29, wherein said low density mat has a density of less than about 2 pounds per cubic foot and a thickness of greater than about 2 inches.